



United States
Department of
Agriculture

A close-up photograph of fresh produce, including several bright orange tomatoes and several dark red raspberries, arranged in a bowl. The background is softly blurred, showing more of the same produce.

FARMERS'
GUIDE TO
FARM BILL
PROGRAMS

FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION

FARM SERVICE AGENCY | NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE | RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY

FARMERS' GUIDE TO 2018 USDA FARM BILL PROGRAMS

This guide describes assistance for farmers, ranchers, and forest managers available through the 2018 Farm Bill.



Farm Service Agency (FSA)



Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)



Risk Management Agency (RMA)

To learn more, visit your local USDA Service Center or farmers.gov.











FUND — Opportunities to access capital to fund your operation.

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| Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) | Provides incentives that help farmers grow bioenergy feedstocks (crops well suited for conversion to energy) and connect with qualified biomass conversion facilities. |
| Down Payment Loans | Provide a low-interest Government loan, made in conjunction with a loan from a commercial lender and borrower down payment, to help beginning, minority, veteran, and women farmers purchase a farm or ranch. |
| Farm Operating Loans | Help producers pay for normal operating expenses, including machinery and equipment, seed, livestock feed, and more. Direct (up to \$400,000) and guaranteed (up to \$1.75 million) operating loans are available. |
| Farm Ownership Loans | Help producers become owner-operators of family farms as well as improve and expand current operations. Direct (up to \$600,000) and guaranteed (up to \$1.75 million) ownership loans are available. |
| Farm Storage Facility Loans | Provide low-interest loans to build, purchase, or upgrade facilities and equipment used to store, handle, or transport eligible commodities. |
| Marketing Assistance Loans | Provide interim financing at harvest time for producers to meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices typically are at harvest-time lows. |
| Microloans | Provide farm loans for annual operating expenses, equipment, livestock, and real estate tailored to small, beginning, underserved, and veteran farmers and diversified farming operations serving local markets. Farm Operating and Farm Ownership Loans of up to \$50,000 each are available. |
| Organic Certification Cost Share Assistance | Provides up to 75 percent of organic certification costs for producers, not to exceed \$750 per certification scope. |
| Youth Loans | Provide operating loans of up to \$5,000 to youth ages 10 to 20 to finance income-producing, agricultural projects that are developed and carried out through Future Farmers of America, Tribal youth organizations, or similar agricultural-affiliated groups. |








MANAGE — Opportunities to mitigate risk on your operation.

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| Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs | Protect farm revenue from changes in market conditions. Provides a safety net to farmers and ranchers when there is a substantial drop in revenue or prices for covered commodities. |
| Conservation Stewardship Program Grassland Conservation Initiative | Provides financial assistance to conserve grasslands through a single opportunity to enroll in a 5-year contract. Eligible lands are limited to cropland for which base acres have been maintained under FSA's ARC/PLC and were planted to grass or pasture, including idle or fallow, during a specific period. Enrolled acreage must be managed consistently with a grassland conservation plan. |
| Dairy Margin Coverage Program (DMC) | Replaces the Margin Protection Program for Dairy. Offers protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer. |
| Federal Crop Insurance | Offers hundreds of different insurance products. Product offerings include coverage for production loss, revenue loss, and price decline. Insurance covers row crops, livestock, specialty crops, organics, dairy, grazing land, and more. |
| Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) | Provides financial assistance to producers of certain eligible crops for which catastrophic risk protection plan of insurance is not available when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to an eligible cause of loss. |

CONSERVE — Opportunities to implement conservation on your operation.

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|  Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) | Helps landowners, land trusts, and other entities protect, restore, and enhance wetlands, grasslands, and working farms and ranches through conservation easements. |
|  Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA) | Helps agricultural producers manage financial risk through diversification, marketing, or natural resource conservation practices. NRCS administers the conservation provisions while USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service and RMA implement the production diversification and marketing provisions. |
|  Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) | Awards competitive grants that drive innovation and develop the tools, technologies, and strategies for next-generation conservation efforts on working lands. Grantees leverage the Federal investment through matching requirements. Through CIG's new On-Farm Trials, partners provide incentive payments to producers to offset the risk of implementing innovative approaches. |
|  Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) | Protects soil, water quality, and habitat by removing highly erodible or environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production through long-term rental agreements. |
|  CRP - Transition Incentives Program | Encourages landowners to sell or lease long term to beginning, socially disadvantaged, and veteran farmers and ranchers willing to implement sustainable practices or transition to organic production by providing 2 years of additional payments for expiring CRP-enrolled land. |
|  Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) | Helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority natural resource concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance—the higher the performance, the higher the payment. |
|  Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) | Provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits, such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, and improved or created wildlife habitat. |
|  Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP) | Helps landowners restore, enhance, and protect forestland resources on private lands through easements and financial assistance. Through HFRP, landowners promote the recovery of endangered or threatened species, improve plant and animal biodiversity, and enhance carbon sequestration. |
|  Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) | Promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. Under partnership agreements, NRCS and its partners leverage and target their respective resources to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners to address priority natural resource concerns. |
|  Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP) | Provides State and Tribal governments with funding or incentives to expand or improve habitat in existing public access programs. |

RECOVER — Opportunities to help your operation recover from a natural disaster.

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|  Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-raised Fish program (ELAP) | Provides assistance to eligible owners of livestock, and producers of honeybees and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease (including cattle tick fever), adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, not covered by LFP and LIP. |
|  Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) | Provides funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to restore farmland damaged by natural disasters and for emergency water conservation measures in severe droughts. |
|  Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP) | Provides funding to restore privately owned forests damaged by natural disasters. |
|  Emergency Loans | Provide loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding, other natural disasters, or quarantine. |
|  Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) | Provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered grazing losses due to drought or fire on land that is native or improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or that is planted specifically for grazing. |
|  Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) | Provides benefits to livestock owners for livestock deaths or injuries in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather or by attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the Federal Government or protected by Federal law. Benefits also are available for reduced sale prices for owned livestock due to injury caused by eligible loss conditions. |
|  Tree Assistance Program (TAP) | Provides financial cost-share assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes, and vines damaged by or lost due to a natural disaster. |

Learn more at:
farmers.gov

Find your local USDA Service Center at:
farmers.gov/service-locator

Contact a crop insurance agent at:
rma.usda.gov/agent

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